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# Iraq

## Status Report

March 10, 2010



Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs  
U.S. Department of State

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## HIGHLIGHTS



- **IHEC Reports 62.4% Voter Participation in National Election (*POLITICAL*, page 4)**
- **ISF Maintain Security During Elections; Violence Did Not Deter Voters (*SECURITY*, page 9)**
- **Iraqi Oil Exports Reach Highest Peak in Twenty Years (*ECONOMIC*, page 11)**

## POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation

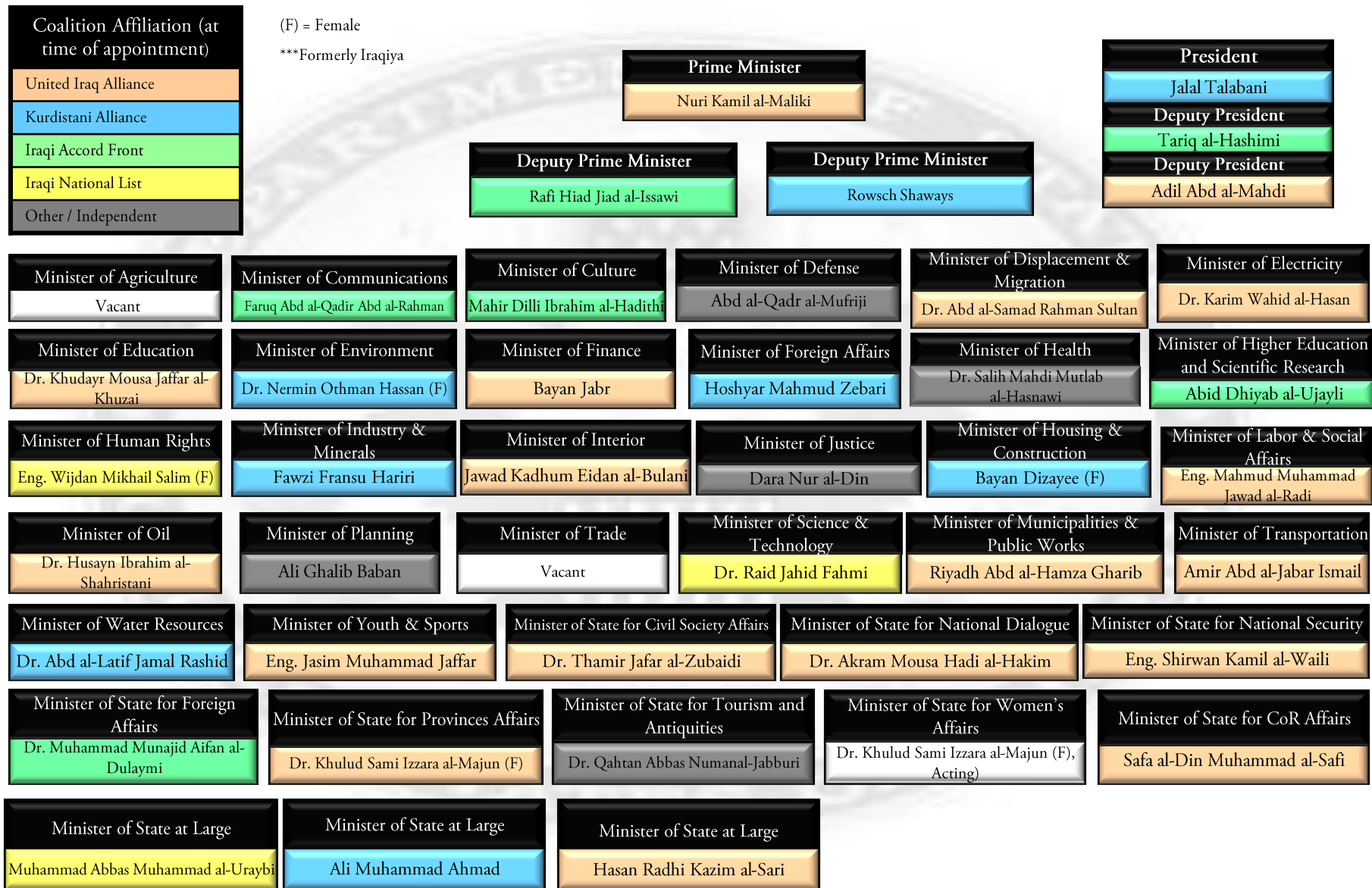


### Iraq successfully conducts a national election

#### **IHEC Reports 62.4% Voter Participation:**

- **Commissioner Hamdiya al-Husseini of Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) announced that the turnout for Iraq's national election was 62.4%. Preliminary results are expected to be released on March 11. The adjudication of complaints is expected to take several weeks.**

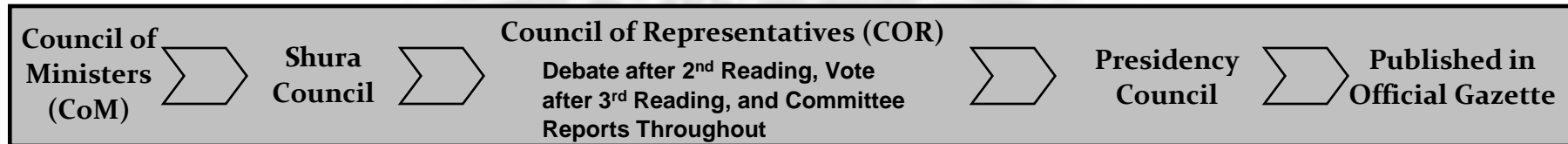
# POLITICAL – Government of Iraq





## POLITICAL – Key Legislative Issues

### Legislative Process



- **Hydrocarbons Package:** The Framework Law was resubmitted to the Oil and Gas Committee on October 26, 2008 and then returned to the Council of Ministers. There has been no progress on the other three laws in the package.
- **NGO Law:** This law, approved March 3, will regulate the operations and funding of Non-Governmental Organizations operating within Iraq.
- **National Elections Law:** The amended election law was approved by the Presidency Council on December 6, 2009.



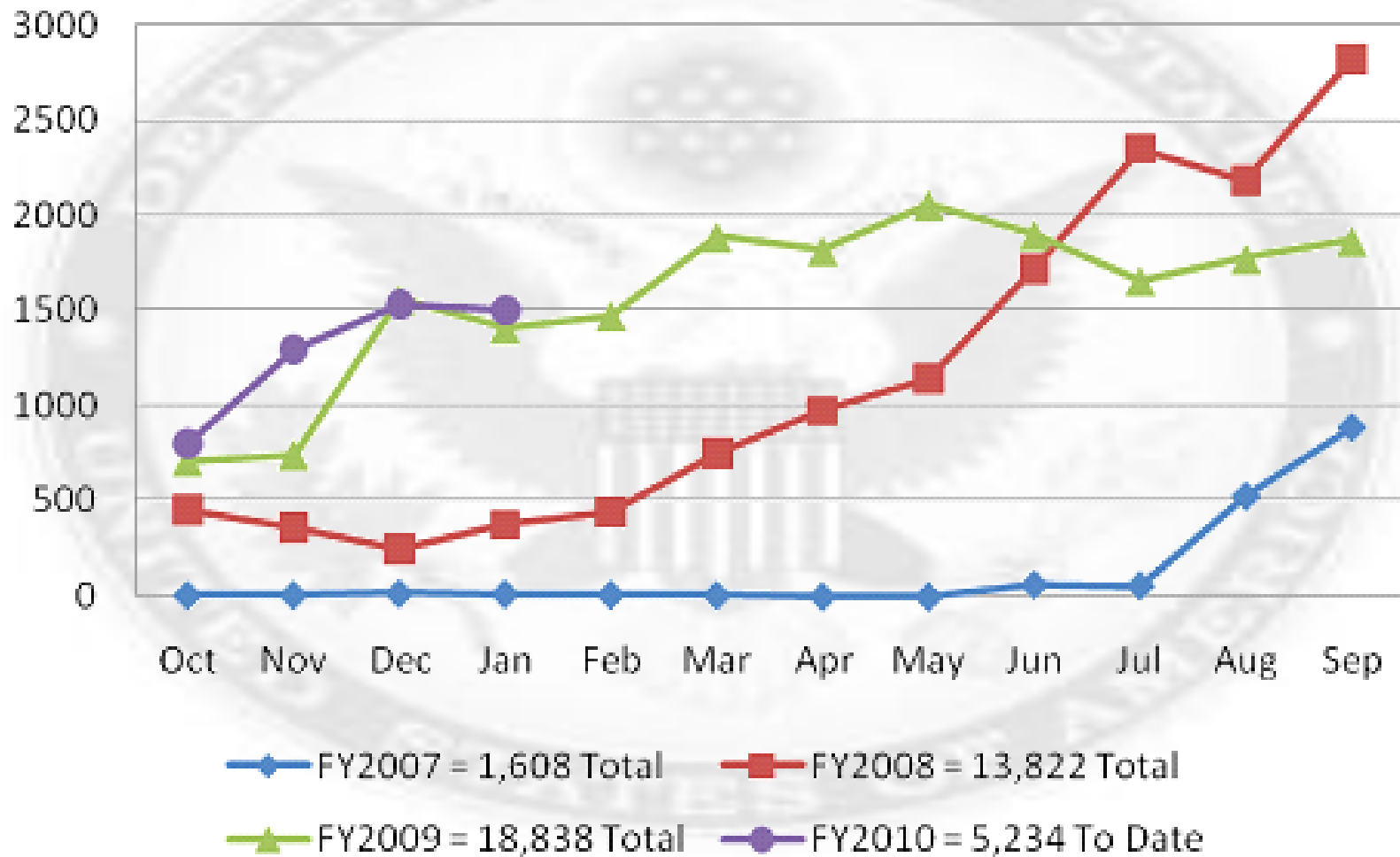
## POLITICAL – Refugee Update



- There are approximately 295,000 Iraqi refugees currently registered with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in neighboring countries. There are likely significant numbers of unregistered refugees as well. UNHCR reports that 1.5 million Iraqis remain internally displaced due to sectarian violence following the Samarra Mosque bombing of February 2006.
- In FY09, the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration contributed \$303.4 million to international and nongovernmental organizations to assist displaced Iraqis inside the country and in the region.
- Since the program's inception in FY07, 40,331 Iraqi refugees have been admitted to the U.S. for resettlement. A total of 18,838 refugees were admitted in FY09. Last week, the U.S. admitted 69 Iraqi refugees.
- As of September 2009, a total of 1,606 Special Immigrant Visa (SIVs) have been issued for Iraqi translators and interpreters (and their dependents) since FY07 (under the Section 1059 program).
- As of September 2009, a total of 3,028 SIVs have been issued for Iraqis employed by the U.S. government (and their dependents) since FY08 (under the Section 1244 program).
- Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced on July 24 that the United States was contributing more than \$100 million in new assistance to support the return and reintegration of displaced Iraqis.

**POLITICAL – Refugee Update**

## Iraqi Admissions to the U.S.







## SECURITY – Situation Update

### GOI continues efforts to combat attacks on eve of national elections

#### ISF Maintain Security During Elections; Violence Did Not Deter Voters:

- Iraqi Security Forces are being commended for their role in maintaining security during this weekend's parliamentary elections. "Even though the threat of violence against voters by insurgents was high and the sound of explosions could be heard in the distance throughout the morning, the ISF remained committed to providing a safe and secure environment for voters." Security was tight as voters made their way to polling stations and attempts to disrupt the elections were thwarted.

#### Iraqi Women Graduate from Basic Training Class:

- Sixty-five soldiers in the third Iraqi Female Basic Combat Training class graduated March 3 after six weeks of training. The soldiers came from throughout Iraq and "learned fundamental military skills such as marching, weapons handling and marksmanship." The soldiers will help provide security during the upcoming elections, despite their primary duties being more administrative. 190 females have completed the training since the course began in 2009. A female BCT training center is being planned by the Iraqi army for future courses.

# ECONOMIC – Oil



## Crude Oil Update:

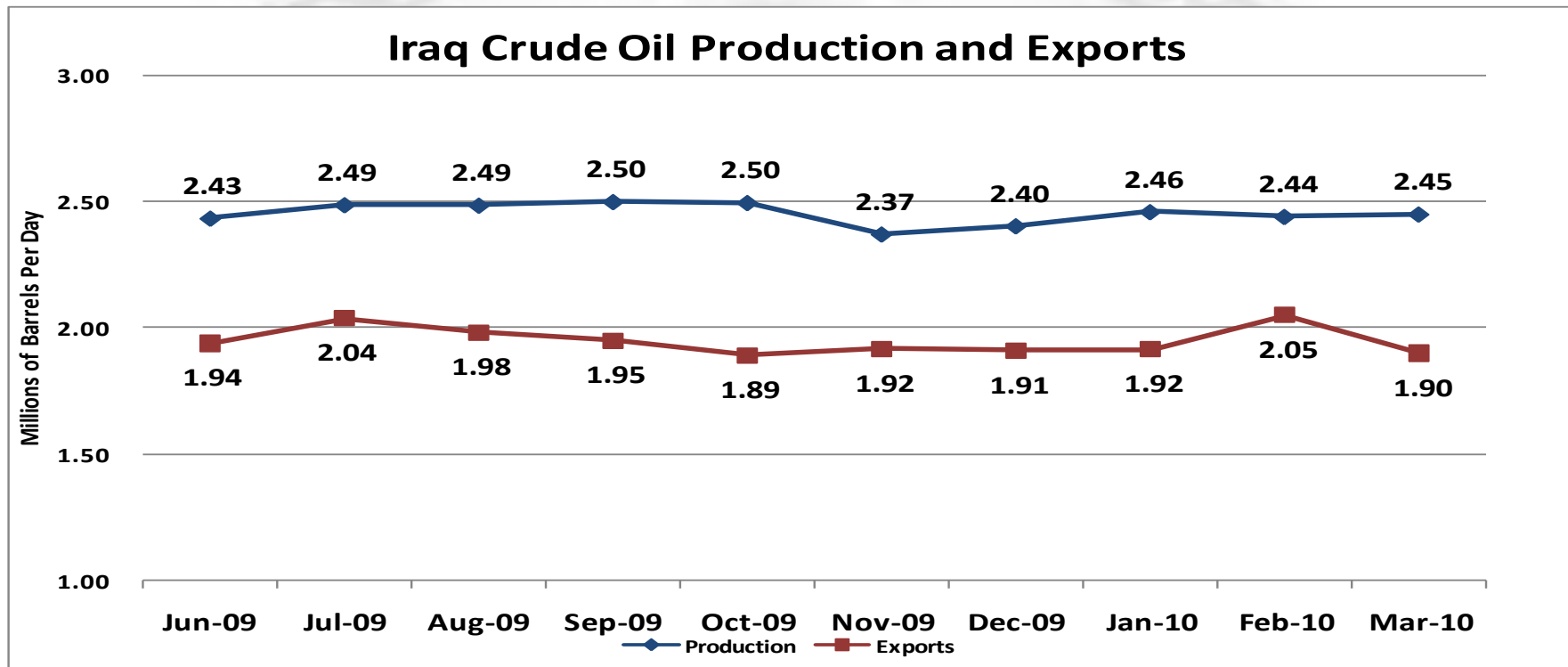
*Price averages in world markets closed with the following prices:*

Basrah Light at \$75.89/barrel

Dated Brent at \$78.09/barrel

WTI Cushing at \$80.39/barrel

Oman/Dubai at \$76.49/barrel



## Revenue estimates:

2008: \$61.9 Billion

2009: \$ 39.2 Billion

2010 (ytd): \$9 Billion

## ECONOMIC – Oil/Gas



Iraq's February oil export levels are the highest in decades

### Iraqi Oil Exports Reach Highest Peak in Twenty Years:

- Oil ministry spokesman Assem Jihad noted that Iraqi exports reached their highest level in February since Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. "Oil exports for February reached 2.069 million barrels (per day) and this is the highest export level since 1990...This is a step towards the ministry's goal of exporting 2.15 million barrels per day this year."

### China Signs Preliminary Deals to Develop Maysan Oil Fields:

- Iraq inked initial agreements with China's CNOOC and Sinochem to develop the 2.5-billion-barrel Maysan oil fields (Buzurgan, Fakka, and Abu Ghurab), Oil Minister Husayn al-Shahristani said on March 8. The companies will sign final deals after the review of the GOI's remuneration fee of 2.30 USD for every additional barrel of oil produced. "The Chinese companies have accepted all our conditions for this field," al-Shahristani said. "We have an authorization from the cabinet to sign the final deal." The Fakka field was the site of a dispute between Iraq and Iran in December 2009, when Iranian troops briefly occupied an oil well.

## ECONOMIC – Oil/Gas



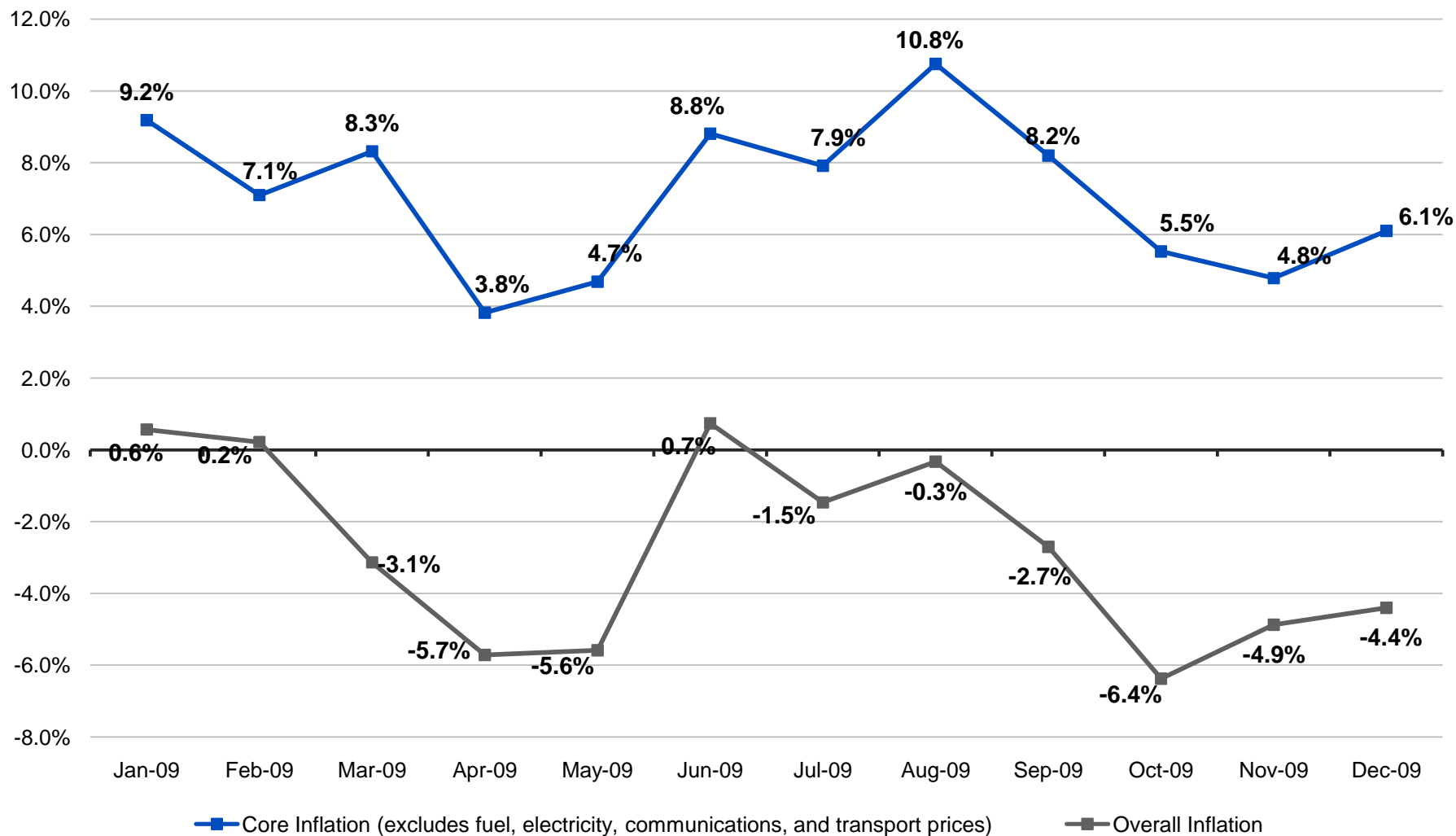
### Iraq Extends MOU on Natural Gas Venture:

- Iraq extended a MOU with Royal Dutch Shell on a natural gas venture around the southern oil hub of Basrah for six months from March 2010. “We will resume talks with Shell after the election,” said Minister of Oil Husayn al-Shahristani. “The Shell contract is in its final form after Shell accepted our remarks and demands,” he said. He gave no further details but said that a final deal would be left to the new government after the national election concluded. Iraq has been working to finalize a multi-billion-dollar joint venture between its South Gas Company, Shell and Mitsubishi which would “capture huge amounts of gas currently being wasted through burning and use it in the domestic market or for exports.”

# ECONOMIC – Fiscal and Monetary Affairs



## Year-on-Year Inflation



## ECONOMIC – Fiscal and Monetary Affairs



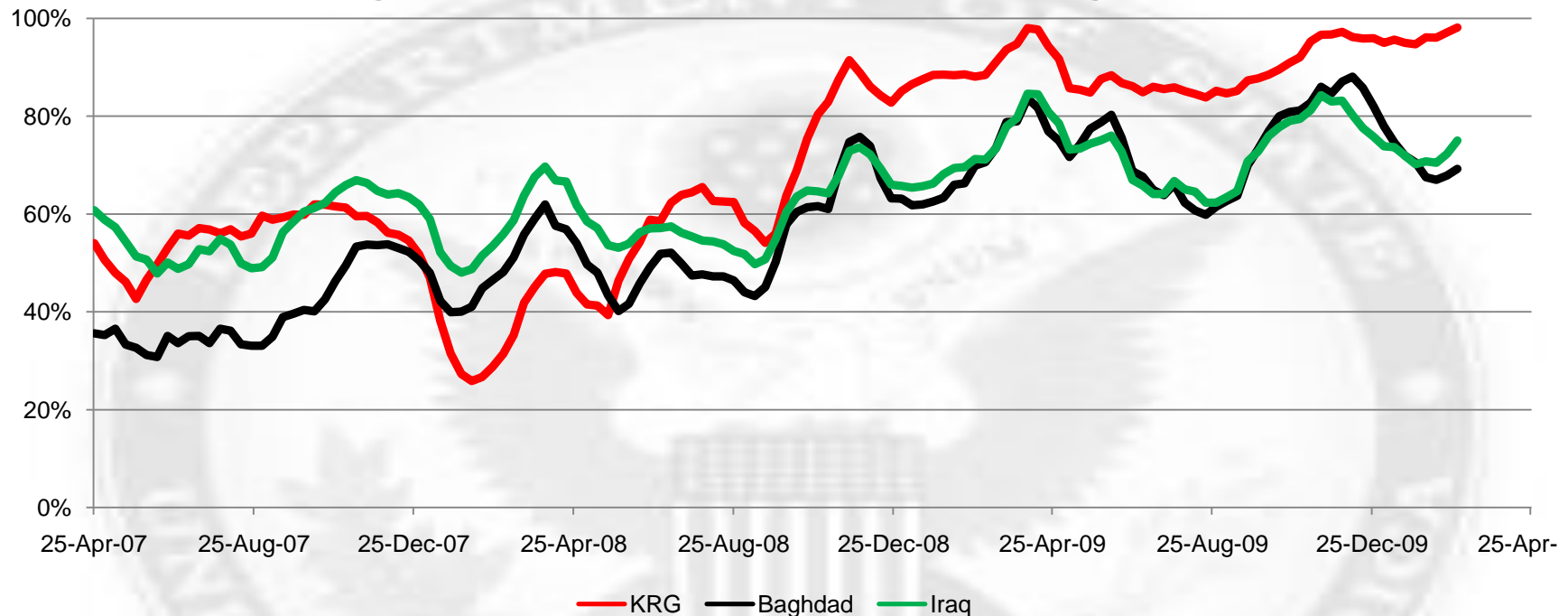
Economic Indicator	This Week	Last Week	Last Month	Last Year
<b>Iraqi Debt Swap Bond Prices and Yields</b>				
Price (USD)	\$78.48	\$77.89	\$73.76	\$64.50
Yield	8.09%	8%	8.12%	10.32%



## Public Services – Electricity



### Percentage of Estimated Demand Met: KRG, Baghdad and Iraq



- In 2007-08, Baghdad and the Kurdish Region (KRG) received below-average service for similar reasons: inadequate local generation and constraints on transfers from other regions -- by insurgent attacks on transmission lines for Baghdad and by the lack of a connection to the Iraq's 400 kV grid for the KRG.
- As a result of added local generation capacity and the near-total cessation of insurgent attacks, Baghdad's service now closely matches the national average.
- The KRG still is not connected to the 400 kV grid but the regional government has used independent power producers to add nearly 1000 MW of local generation. As a result, the KRG now receives above-average service.



## Beyond Baghdad



Children at the cultural arts festival in al-Kut, Wasit partake in the "Reconciliation Children's Performance"

### *Wasit*

**"...we will help Iraq's institutions strengthen their capacity to protect the rule of law, confront corruption, and deliver basic services."**

*President Barack Obama*

### *Recent Highlights*

The Provincial Reconstruction Team in Wasit sponsored a cultural arts festival on February 26 at the Wasit Provincial Council Auditorium in the city of al-Kut. The festival featured photography, paintings, and poetry recitals by local artists and focused on the themes of reconciliation and anti-corruption. The event was also used as a forum to promote voter participation in the upcoming elections by the Chairman of the Iraqi High Electoral Commission (IHEC) who presented two videos on the importance of voting. The festival concluded with a performance by the "Mud House" theatrical troupe. The group, which is composed of well-known TV and stage actors, performed skits focusing on "voting and individual democratic responsibility" to over 400 attendees.

### *Anbar*

Anbar PRT, in cooperation with the Director General of Agriculture Extension and the Provincial Government, sent a second class of Anbari farmers to the National Research Center in Cairo, Egypt. The class of five men will "receive training in the use of greenhouses for growing vegetables and fruit." Once these farmers return from their training in Egypt they will work with hundreds of other Anbaris just starting their greenhouse farming and train them with their recently acquired knowledge.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

**This brief draws from multiple sources. References are cited on the following pages.**

**For additional information, please see:**

- Department of State, Section 2207 Report on Iraq Relief and Reconstruction  
<http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/>
- Department of State, Section 1227 Report on Iraq  
<http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/>
- Department of Defense, Section 9010 Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq  
[http://www.defenselink.mil/home/features/Iraq\\_Reports/index.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/home/features/Iraq_Reports/index.html)

**Please forward all questions and/or comments to:**

**[NEA-I-IPOG-DL@state.gov](mailto:NEA-I-IPOG-DL@state.gov)**



## NOTES AND SOURCE CITATIONS (1 of 2)

Slide 4:

- Reuters, March 8, [http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20100308/wl\\_nm/us\\_iraq\\_election\\_25](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20100308/wl_nm/us_iraq_election_25); Aswat al-Iraq, March 5, <http://en.aswataliraq.info/?p=128039>;
- Reuters, March 9, [http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20100309/wl\\_nm/us\\_iraq\\_election\\_28](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20100309/wl_nm/us_iraq_election_28)

Slides 5-8:

- Department of State, NEA Political Section, [NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov](mailto:NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov)

Slide 9:

- USF-I, March 7, <http://www.usf-iraq.com/news/press-releases/security-paved-way-to-successful-iraqi-elections-leaders>
- USF-I, March 4, <http://www.usf-iraq.com/news/press-releases/iraqi-army-females-graduate-basic-training-pleased>

Slide 10:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economics Section, [NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov](mailto:NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov)

Slide 11

- AFP, March 2, 2010, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g4C-iCVpTEIpQzUuCrCIjOaA4BnQ>
- Money Control, March 8, 2010, [http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/iraq-signs-initial-deal-for-maysan-oilfields\\_445359.html](http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/iraq-signs-initial-deal-for-maysan-oilfields_445359.html)

Slide 12:

- (Reuters UK, March 7, 2010, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKLDE62605720100307?pageNumber=2&virtualBrandChannel=11700&sp=true>)



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- Department of State, NEA/I Economics Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov

Slide 14:

- Department of State, NEA/I Iraq Policy and Operations Group, NEA-I-IPOG-DL@state.gov

Slide 15:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economics Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov

Slide 16:

- Source for Stories: U.S. Embassy Baghdad, [http://iraq.usembassy.gov/prt\\_wasit022610.html](http://iraq.usembassy.gov/prt_wasit022610.html)
- PRT Weekly Lines of Operation Summary, February 2-12
- Source for President Obama's Quote: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Remarks-of-President-Barack-Obama-Responsibly-Ending-the-War-in-Iraq/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-of-President-Barack-Obama-Responsibly-Ending-the-War-in-Iraq/)